



ORIGINAL IMAGE

by

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The Original Image

I. The Function of Theory: Can it Mediate the Global Transformation of Consciousness.

Part I, Sec. 1 of the Divine Principle concerns the Principle of Creation.¹ In this sense it must represent the foundation, the cornerstone of the whole doctrine. It is that with which you begin if you want to understand the whole scheme of God's operation with, and plan for, the world. If we are "struggling to gain happiness" (p. 1), the text tells us that this must come from "the original mind of man" (p. 2). If so, God's plan in creation and "the original image" is not unimportant but all important. If we can understand our original image, it seems that we might be one step on the road to understanding how to restore that image, now lost. It might mediate a global transformation of consciousness, or at least work toward it.

We know that all humanity does not now "delight in the law of God" (Ibid.), else we would not need such large police forces and such massive jails. Originally, we are told, we hated evil and exalted goodness, which we know is not our situation today, that is if we read a morning newspaper. We have not followed our original mind. Thus to get back to it, to understand what it is, is a crucial first step. We are now bound to contradictions in our behavior, the text tells us, which is certainly true. Thus to understand our original image as free of contradiction is our first condition of release. The contradictions in our behavior were not original and thus are not necessary but subject to elimination, if we understand how our original image was formed and how it was lost.

In our inmost self, we delight "in the law of God" (p. 2). As we observe the human scene, one would not guess this. But if it is true as projected, we can hope for change, that is if our "original mind" is not like our current mind and if we can hope for return. If the original mind hates evil and exalts goodness, we have some hope of halting evil, if we can recover that original mind and so transform consciousness. We presently embody contradictions, of course, but we were not created with them (p. 3), thank God. One way to recover our original mind is to advance, to take science and unite it with religion. So the recovery of our original mind is not a retreat to primitiveness but an advance with science.

¹ Washington, D.C., 1973. All page numbers are to this edition. Copywrite The Holy Spirit Association for the Unity of World Christianity. No author listed.

Historically, Christianity has not been able to recover our original mind fully. The two worlds, the ideal and the real, the spiritual and the physical, need to be united. A new expression of truth is needed (p. 9). Man cannot live apart from God, so the new truth must enable us to know God as reality. It must also unite all existing religions into one way (p. 11). The world this truth will reveal is one where all men and women live together in harmony under God as our parent. The sinful history of man can be liquidated in this new age. However, we must know the original purpose of God in creating us. The new truth must come as a revelation from God. We must learn the original plan for creation (p. 19). But how can we know the characteristics of God who is an invisible being? By observing the created world, the answer comes (p. 20); where the invisible image becomes visible.

This assumption is crucial to the whole plan: We can know God's characteristics by observing the created world (Ibid.). This is because, for a created world to come into being, a reciprocal relationship between positivity and negativity must be achieved. A female characteristic is dormant in every man, a male in every woman. "All things are created to exist through a reciprocal relationship between their dual characteristics" (p. 21). Thus, anything in existence has both an external form and an internal character. "The invisible internal character is the cause and is in the subjective position, while the visible external form is the result of the former and stands in an objective position to it" (p. 22). The ultimate being is the First Cause of all beings, "containing the absolute and subjective character and form" (p. 23).

"The universe is God's substantial object consisting of individual; truth incarnations" (p. 26). The Book of Change, the I Chang, makes the assertion that "positivity and negativity represent God, the subject who contains dual essentialities" (p. 27). Give and take action governs all relationships among human beings. After the human Fall, man was cut off from having a give and take relationship with God. Thus, "if and when fellow man unites with Jesus in a perfect give and take relationship, we will be able to restore his original nature" (p. 30). The four position foundation is manifested as God, husband and wife and their offspring. "Any object must first unite with its subject before it is able to stand as an object to God" (p. 33).

"The purpose of the universe's existence centered on man is to return joy to God" (p. 41). "Man can attain deity if his mind and body have formed a four position foundation of the original God-centered nature" (p. 43). And such a man could never fall. "The

universe is a representation of God's essential character and form" (p. 52). One practices the will of God by experiencing God's heart. Man is the mediator and center of harmony between the two worlds, the visible and the invisible (p. 59). "But the kingdom of God in heaven can be realized only after the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth" (p. 61). However, the destination of man is decided by man himself, not by God. The original mind helps man separate himself from evil and face God (p. 64).

Now Unification Thought contains the essence of past thoughts (p. xxii).¹ If man is created in the image of God, we must understand the Original Image. We need to understand the ideal for creation. But "the cause of the universe has never been correctly understood" (pp. 3-4). A correct understanding can lead us to find a new solution to actual problems. "Everything was created according to ideas in God's mind," which we must understand (p. 8). Although both Sung Sang and Hung Sang are attributes of God, "the Unification Principle ascribes another set of dual characteristics to God, namely positivity and negativity" (p. 17). Yet God's most essential character is heart.

"Every existing being is created in the direct or indirect image of God, so it resembles God both in content and in structure" (p. 76). Created by God, "man is the direct image of God" (p. 81). However, we learn finally that love is the most essential attribute of God. With the correct understanding of man "we can rescue society from its present confusion" (p. 84). "We should, therefore, establish order and realize values in our lives, in order to realize happiness, peace, and prosperity -- the Kingdom of Heaven on earth" (p. 96). But man has inherited properties that discord with original human nature. As a result of the Fall, he is unable to realize his original nature and the original ideal world. Man has been unable to become what he truly wishes to be. But harmonizing the relationship between husband and wife represents harmonizing and unifying the whole world.

Human beings are the mediator between the two worlds, because we are to dominate in the spiritual as well as in the physical, "even while still living on earth" (p. 112). However, unless our intellectual aspects are accompanied by aspects of faith and heart, "people will not be moved" (p. 113). "We need a concrete idea on how to realize true love -- that is God's love" (p. 132). In this way we have a view of the nature of all human beings, their relationship to God expressed through the manner of creation. But next we have

¹ Explaining Unification Thought. Sang Hung Lee. Unification Thought Institute. New York, 1981. See also *Fundamentals of Unification Thought*, forthcoming, especially Chapter I.

to move on and ask: (1) In what sense can this theory unite all humanity; and more important: (2) Can it move us individually or collectively to achieve our original purpose, granted that we have fallen away from it? What can theory, any theory, do and not do?

II. Can Theory Unite and Save?; Can Theory Create a New Global Transformation of Consciousness

Gnosticism emerged early in the development of Christianity as a challenge to its original understanding. 'Gnosticism' in its simplest meaning expresses the confidence that we can be 'saved', 'restored', 'preserved' by increased understanding, enlightenment, or by appropriating a higher learning. Jesus' disciples thought Jesus would save them from their captive situation. But their hopes were frustrated by Jesus' crucifixion and his refusal to defend himself under attack. Then, in the midst of their confusion and disappointment, God reversed this by divine power and resurrected Jesus, so that the disciples came to assert that death, that traditional threat to human hopes, has been conquered.

As this 'gospel' was preached and spread, it became doctrine as it was codified in the gospels and in the letters written by the early followers. Thus, it is natural to experience the exhilaration of preaching that news. The very saying of it, given our understanding and acceptance of it, seems to release us. But then the conflict comes. Is it our new understanding, our enlightenment, that seems in itself to be the means of our release? Thus, it appears to us that the new insight itself is the source of our renewal. However, the problem is that the basis for this gospel, the hearing of which affects our salvation, is a telling of what God's intervening power has unexpectedly accomplished.

The issue then is: Does our new knowledge in itself effect our release, or is it God's power that accomplishes this, a fact merely reflected in the knowledge. Is it our power of understanding that releases us, or is it only God's power, if it intervenes again? We have powers of understanding; others can enlighten us; we can learn and achieve new levels of consciousness. But if we are to be saved, released from what prevents our human fulfillment, can this be done through human power alone? Or does it come only through a God who intervenes with necessity, a power not fully under our control? Can a change in consciousness induced by theory have a salvific effect? And if it is not within our power to release ourselves, is God's action necessary, and does it operate only at God's discretion which

we cannot control? The Modern God has tended to be Gnostic, due to the vast expansion of human power through modern science. Can any theory in itself release us, even if it expands consciousness?

The problem is that if God's power is needed to gain the improvement we need, then even if we see our "original image" as derived from God, if we are still unable to fulfill or restore that image in our lives, discovering our original image is not of itself a great deal of help unless God's power intervenes. In fact, realizing ourselves that we were once in God's image can be discouraging, if we lack the power to change and live in that way. Of course, to realize that is in itself a major advance, because what we see in the human scene before us is quite different. It is not a divine image but a human nature which looks very ungodlike. We can be told about our "original image", but there is no way to convince someone of this by any evidence that is in front of us in the world we know. The Original Image appears as an ideal projection.

We know that the principle of creation is foundational to Unification Thought, but as Plato remarked, all creation theories are "likely tales". We can never confirm them, because no one observed this event. This fact is important because, if you want to urge people to search to restore their "original mind", we will not have much success unless we convince others that we once had this, and this is not evident in the world if we look around us. What we see in the human nature we know looks very much like what human nature and conduct has always been. We have to come to feel, to be convinced, that the contradictions in our current behavior can be overcome. At present, they seem to be part of our necessary and unremovable condition.

The recovery of original mind has been connected to uniting science to religion, but we have to question the success of this attempt. Historic Christianity has not done this, so it is said that a new expression of truth is needed. Yet will the restoration of original mind occur only for those who accept this new truth, whose consciousness is raised by it? If so, the level of evil in the world may not recede very much, unless we follow authoritarian movements that attempt to force this truth on the masses. The unification of all religions is also said to be a condition, so we have to ask whether this in fact is occurring or is likely to. Ironically, does the introduction of the "new truth" have the counterproductive effect of splitting us further apart religiously? We need to examine the history of the introduction of new religious/philosophical theories to determine this.

Perhaps most important, it is said that we must know God's mind in creating. So that to tie the reduction of evil and the improvement of human nature to our knowledge of God is to tie the project to the most divisive of objects in human history. We have multitudinous theories about the divine nature, but we also have a legion of mystics who tell us that final knowledge of God is not possible, and some even say that it is not desirable. So the claim to know God's plan may possibly be the ultimate human rational arrogance. If one argues that this plan of God's has been revealed, one need not disbelieve that claim in order to believe that our ability to receive and to formulate such revelation with finality is beyond human capacity.

In dealing with this issue, perhaps the crucial question is whether we can discern this ideal plan by observing the created world. That has been asserted, but the problem is that many different views of God have been written using the natural world as a base, so this means that no one view of God can be obvious in nature. The question becomes: Why should this particular view of God taken from observing the world be accepted over others which have been offered before? Hume has argued against 'natural religion', a religious view derived from an observation of nature. Thus, we do know we can make no progress until we are able to explain why one recent view is to be preferred over earlier accounts. God's operation in the world is not obvious, else atheism would not be possible.

We can talk about internal and external relationships, but we have no guarantee that what is internal can ever be perfectly expressed in any external form. We may be in a paradoxical situation in which, as Kierkegaard remarked, the internal is never perfectly manifest in the external, the external is never the expression of the internal -- fully. In addition, we are told that only when we unite with Jesus will we be able to restore our original nature. Many have testified to be being changed ("saved") by relation to Jesus, but will this ever spread to great numbers or will it always be a minority experience? A model for relationship to God has been outlined, but will those who achieve this ever rule the world and so translate vision into social structure? If the experience remains that of a minority, it cannot achieve a global transformation of consciousness.

If we must understand the ideas in God's mind by which the world was created, in order to be restored to our original mind, that is an immense project. If we listen to this theory of "the original image", will our acceptance of it in itself cause us to change? Our

question in this section concerns the power of theory. So we must ask if it is possible to understand some theory as the truth and still be unable to move or to change. Would we not be better off to settle the pressing issues of the day (e.g., hunger) and address them practically, as Pragmatists do, and not count on agreeing on any theory of God and the divine creative ideas and our Original Nature? Can we set our goals for change without first gaining unity of theory?

III. Can We Improve the Future Without Understanding the Past?

Our summary question: Will a simple knowledge of the Original Image, the ideas of creation in the mind of God, do much to bring about a change? And even if accepted, what would a "global transformation of consciousness" produce? If we see, by comparison, that we have deviated or "fallen" from that original image, that contrast in itself could cause us to seek restoration. But on the other hand, this realization could only cause us to seek to forget such a distant ideal and to immerse ourselves in concerns or satisfaction of the day. This is often the response we see about us. Thus, we must be sure that we individually, or perhaps collectively, agree to this original image as a model. But what is even more difficult, we may simply disagree or reject it. "The good we would that we do not", as Saint Paul said.

How does power operate to produce, or to inhibit, change? Ideas of creation and the original image could be powerless in themselves to produce change, and might even frustrate change or improvement for some. Ideas alone may not alter global consciousness, even if Hegel and Marx thought they could. It could be that power does not come from agreeing about a theory or a description of unity. Perhaps even this insight is powerless in itself, not necessarily motivating. How can an ideal which we see cause change in us or in our consciousness? One could argue that evil is more powerful in the world and that ideal images seem influential only for a few, valuable as they may be for the few. Perhaps it is ironically true that religious views operate on individuals and that the world of humans and nature operates on principles which seem unaffected by religion, except occasionally and in small if attractive instances.

Thus, if our understanding of the past, or even of religious principles except in individual cases, does not affect the future, is there a way in which we can affect change without depending on an understanding of the past and agreeing on God and an "original

image"? I suggest that both Pragmatism and Existentialism offer an interesting contrast. This is not to say that a notion of the Original Image cannot be effective. But perhaps we can form a clearer picture of how this might be possible if we contrast it to some alternatives. Pragmatism argues that we can discern the present problems which block us and that, without metaphysical/theological considerations, we can use our reason to see what practical actions are needed to solve these problems. Elaborate ideologies may actually delay action by inducing increased intellectual controversy and thus diversity rather than unity.

Existentialism tells us that the issues are there, and that there are various theories which raise various questions, but that action depends more on our relationship to theory rather than on the correctness of the theory. It is not that there are not theoretical questions which must be dealt with as such, and some may be very close to expressing what is true. But change and improvement, these depend more on our relationship to any theory than on the "truth" of the theory itself. Action is subjective; theory is objective; and our approach is not the same on both levels. Lack of decisiveness, not lack of correct theory, is often to blame for our continued low estate.

Our problem lies with individual lack of decisiveness more than with a failure to understand an ideal. Thus, our different ideals need not be fully reconciled and brought into unity of agreement for change to occur, because our primary failures do not lie on that level. How, then, can we promote decisiveness within individuals? Knowledge is not our basic problem; action is. Thus, we need to explore the sources of human decisiveness and action. Theoretical considerations may in fact deflect us from the problem by substituting intellectual activity for the practical solutions needed. If this is true, we need to explore the sources that either move or restrict the human will rather than argue over the acceptability of a theory of creation. Is theory therefore useless? No. It just is not in itself necessarily a source of action or commitment.

If we turn to God and ask how divinity moves to accomplish its aim, we may find that we need more than a theory of the principles of creation. Can our understanding of God stimulate us to action to improve individuals and whole societies as well? It would seem that this would occur more through the human will than through the human mind. How is our will stimulated, then? It can be attracted by ideals. But ideals can change, which means that no theory can in itself enact change continuously. What attracts the will? Perhaps, if it is faced with choices which cannot be reconciled, the will is more likely to commit itself than when offered a universally agreed upon

theory. What are the sources and direction and control of power? This is where the issue lies.

IV. Does an Emerging Transformation of Global Consciousness Help or Hinder Human Restoration?

Religions, we know, have often transformed persons, however unfortunately not always for the good. But can a transformation of consciousness, even if global, accomplish such fundamental change? Hegel of course thought this was the way change occurred, the incarnation of the Idea in history. But we have Marx's contrasting theory, that only a shift in the material forces alters the course of history. Against both we have the Pragmatist disparagement of theory as often stifling change and the Existentialist assertion that change comes only from individual decisiveness, never from theory.

As far as consciousness goes, we know that global awareness is increasing, due to modern methods of communication, transportation and the media. But it could be argued that this actually hinders change by producing massive forces that are less easy to control than when problems were regional and provincial. Size may corrupt and paralyze, except possibly in the case of corrupting forces, e.g., the spread of a world-wide drug cartel or rising militarism. Thus, we must not be naïvely optimistic either that an emerging global consciousness makes solutions easier rather than more difficult or that the transformations it may bring are necessarily more for improvement than for destruction and increased danger.

We must also make a careful distinction between 'religion' as an operative force and 'theory'. The theory of the Original Image outlines a theory of possible (hopeful) global application. But even true theories may be ineffective to induce change, at least of the magnitude and power needed to restore human nature. Further, as we have indicated, theories may cause disunity more than unity, so it is questionable to rely on even an attractive new theory to unite us for global change, although it may certainly alter individuals dramatically (hopefully for the good) and create small communities. 'Religion' is a different matter. It tends to institutionalization and thus can move world-wide, such as Christianity, Judaism or Buddhism.

However, just as religious impulse tends to become institutionalized to preserve itself and to spread, it tends to become conservative, to identify with existing social and state structures in order to protect itself and to gain power (even if for good purposes).

But as it becomes a religion, this transforming spirit tends to lose its vitality and thus is forced to wait for a new transforming individual spirit in charismatic individuals, e.g., Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, etc. And even if this happens in our own day as new dynamic religious figures emerge (which we should welcome, else religions go moribund), this never amounts to global transformation or Salvation. The weight of nature and human corruption seems too great for that.

It is of course quite possible that God would reveal new truths to us for our benefit. This has been claimed in the past (e.g., Jesus, Mary Baker Eddy, Joseph Smith) and these revelations have produced considerable results. But in spite of human wishful thinking and understandable hope, there is no evidence for the ultimate unity of all of God's 'revelations'. It is as if God did not intend to offer uniformity in the revelatory powers divinity offers to the world. An intellectual, theoretical Tower of Babel has been erected by God's own utterances to keep men and women from stealing the fire of divine knowledge from heaven. Figuratively, God knew of Prometheus' intent and made powerful fires available for humans to appropriate (atomic bombs, modern medicine), but God also made the sources of such fire divergent and diverse, not unified for easy appropriation.

And in spite of the transforming power of religion in contrast to theory, in spite of the hopes of Marx, Hegel, the Enlightenment, and now Feminist Theory for transformation via theory, religion as the more dominant force (along with any form of power) tends to be individual in its ritual practice, and thus it forms sects rather than universal societies. Theory hopes for universal acceptance and thus for universal transformation via altered consciousness, but history does not offer us any example to confirm this hope, in spite of the Modern World's hope that science would bring this about as knowledge expanded.

What then of the Unification hope for global transformation of consciousness via understanding God in the original image, and thus divinity's plan for human restoration from the corruption of evil? The theory as outlined may be theoretically unobjectionable. Numerous individuals may find it insightful, and some may even find God's power operating in it to alter their consciousness and even their actions in dramatic and even desirable ways (not all transformation of consciousness is desirable, e.g., drug addiction, inciting racial hatred). Yet there is no reason to suppose that this will expand to global proportion. Christianity became international in its scope and powerful as a consequence, but it is questionable to say that its power has always been used for good.

We must also consider whether (as contemporary science seems to suppose) more than one theory can explain nature, so that no theory can be assumed to be final, no matter how attractive at the time. Theories are words and concepts, not ontological structures, and those structures can always be exercised and expanded in theoretical form in new ways. Language is fluid, not fixed, and so it is often a questionable base for unity, unless physical force is used to restrain deviation from theory, as we know it has been. Theory can terrorize as well as liberate, if united with physical coercion. It may be more valuable for us to support liberty of conscience, no matter how divisive, rather than to press for unity of theory, no matter how attractive.

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